

President's Monthly Report December 2011/January 2012

Recent Developments in the Ontario Postsecondary Education System

Ontario Satellite Campus Discussion

The Ontario government has developed an interest in satellite campuses as part of the expansion of post-secondary education to meet expected demand in the next four years, especially in the greater GTA region. OISE and the U of T are hosting a symposium in February entitled “*Three New Campuses for Ontario: A Symposium on Options, Challenges, and Possibilities*”. Trent University will be represented, as will our partners from Durham College and UOIT, and together we will emphasize our unique strategic collaboration, complementary strengths, existing infrastructure, and strong partnerships with regional and municipal governments in the Durham Region. Working with colleges – such as Durham, Fleming and Loyalist – is a great strength of Trent – for example, I shared the podium with Fleming College at the January Downtown Business Improvement Association breakfast meeting in Peterborough, and we highlighted the crucial nature of our existing collaborative activities in programming, research and economic development. We also suggested that these activities are likely to increase in future, and new areas of collaboration are opening up (such as in international student recruitment). On the other hand, there are significant implications to changes in the roles of colleges and universities within the postsecondary education sector in the province. A renewed conversation about these relationships is the focus of a new COU Standing Committee, of which I am a member. One general issue is the apparent ‘blurring’ of the traditional roles of universities and colleges – and potentially, an increasing competition for scarce resources at a time when some institutions are concerned about constrained mandates within the ‘differentiation’ agenda. At the January meeting of the Standing Committee, discussion included an analysis of the trends in community colleges to granting more degrees, credit-transfer patterns, and college applied research initiatives.

Ontario Tuition Grant

Jeff Leal, MPP for Peterborough, hosted an announcement at Fleming College in January to highlight the new 30% Ontario Tuition Grant. Students who receive OSAP will be considered automatically for the grant. An on-line application is now open for all others to apply at <http://www.ontario.ca/30off>, or call the Ontario Tuition Grant Hotline at 1-888-449-4478. This new program was introduced to help make education more accessible and affordable – and estimates are that approximately 2000 Trent University students are eligible for the grant this year. However, some funding arrangements previously supported by the government have been changed to accommodate this new expenditure. For example, certain competitive research programs are now either cancelled or postponed, and the Ontario Trust for Student Support (OTTS), an Ontario matching scholarship program will be discontinued effective March 31, 2012 (although current commitments will be honoured, at least to the end of the fiscal year).

Endowment Lands Master Plan and Capital Planning Updates

Trent’s Endowment Lands Master Plan was approved in 2006, and several aspects of that plan are now under serious consideration for implementation. The most significant aspects involve the lands that comprise the various parcels of land in the vicinity of Armour Road and Nassau Mills Road as the site of a ‘sustainable community’, and the potential for a ‘research park’ as originally envisioned to the east of the campus on Pioneer Road. The idea of supporting the City of Peterborough’s need for new playing

fields and a northern city location for a twin-pad ice rink is also of interest, but require the servicing questions on the East Bank to be resolved in the near future.

Capital planning has continued around Trent's three capital priorities: Bata Library (led by Robert Clarke), Environmental Science Building (led by Prof. Doug Evans and Stephen Bocking), and Oshawa Phase II (led by Prof. Brendan Hickie). Each of these projects has an academic focus – new lecture spaces, as well as new academic space (such as research facilities) and student learning infrastructure. The notion of a 'student commons' to house student-run activities and support for student learning (such as a 'student-technology centre' is a long cherished capital planning priority of Trent and the Trent Central Student Association on the Symons Campus – and every effort will be made to incorporate this development into the library and ES capital plans. Many possible locations of such new capital development are conceivable – perhaps in the space between the Bata Library and the Athletic Centre, adjacent to Gzowski, or as an additional wing in the current ESB. Conceptual designs will be available in the next few months for preliminary review. The ability to move forward on these initiatives will depend on the availability of government capital funding sources potentially supplemented by philanthropy.

Major Consultative and Administrative Activities

Trent's Academic and Budget Planning

Early feedback on the draft of Trent's Academic Plan, entitled *Radical Recovery: An Academic Plan for Trent University (2012-2015)*, has been generally positive and constructive. The Provost's Academic Plan Advisory Committee has been expanded to include the Deans, and a new draft was circulated in January prior to consideration by Trent's governing bodies, the Senate and Board, at their upcoming meetings.

Trent's Annual Operating Budget (2012-2013), as part of the three-to-five-year Multiyear Budget Framework, is under preparation for presentation to the Board for approval in April. There are many planning components of significance, in addition to enrolment projections, and salary and operating expenditures, estimates of pension liabilities, deferred maintenance, and overall provincial decision-making that will impact our budget (e.g., tuition framework). Early consultation, as part of commitment to a Trent Financial Literacy Program (as suggested in Trent's Integrated Plan), has included: Board of Governors, Academic Planning and Budget Committee of Senate, Provost's Planning Group (PPG), Extended Management Committee, Financial Information Subcommittee of TUFA, OPSEU Labour Relations Committee, and Colleges and Student Services Committee (through its associated ancillary budget levy groups).

50th Anniversary Steering Committee

Planning for Trent's 50th Anniversary (September 2014-June 2015) is continuing, and the 50th Anniversary Steering Committee will be sharing the vision and framework for their planning at a series of meetings in February. The 50th Anniversary is a unique milestone to engage all our stakeholders in a celebration of our past and is a pivotal opportunity to showcase Trent's many accomplishments, positioning us for future success.

Water Street Residence Project

Construction on the Residence Development Corporation (RDC) Water Street Residence Project started late last fall with the completion of all planning approvals and the agreement of Trent University. The first of four planned buildings will be ready for student occupancy in September 2012, and will be an excellent addition to the current housing options available to Trent students, which are fully detailed on the Trent University Housing website (<https://www.trentu.ca/housing/overview.php>).

Internal and External Relations (December 1, 2011 - January 31, 2012)

Internal Meetings

Trent University staff and faculty meetings (27)

Trent University students and student groups (12)

Trent University Board members, and committees/subcommittee meetings (20)

Trent University senior administrators (22)

External Meetings

Community leaders and community groups in Peterborough/Oshawa (9)

Other Organizations (38)

Events (14)

The President's Monthly Report is available on the *Office of the President's Website* at http://www.trentu.ca/administration/presidentsoffice_reports.php. Questions or comments are welcome (sfranklin@trentu.ca).